

“ POTS/Packet Bridge 140 is interconnected with both POTS network 110 and packet network 120. Communication through packet network 120 is obtained via one or more TCP/IP connections, one such TCP/IP connection being shown illustratively as 141. ^{a 2} POTS/Packet Bridge 140 is also connected to POTS network 110 through one or more connections 142 carrying voice grade signals. Methods for connecting POTS voice grade signals to the POTS/Packet Bridge 140 in accordance with the intent of the present invention will be evident to those skilled in the art.”

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please withdraw claims 5 and 41 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please add the following claims:

68. (New) A system for bridging a first communications network having a payload subnetwork and a signaling subnetwork with a second communications network that is packet-switched, comprising:

a bridge component to selectively transfer information between the first communication network and the second communication network, the bridge component being configured to:

^{a 3}

- a. determine a desired characteristic associated with a requested communication;
- b. determine traffic conditions for each of the first communications network and the second communications network; and